A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, March 18. 1707.

JUST thus I foretold you, Gentlemen, it would be; and yet I see no great Forecast in it, that I should claim the Title of a Conjurer. Did ever any body expect the Union to go on in *England*, and have no long Speeches cry'd about Streets, no *Maybe's* and *Suppoſes* ſtarted, no *ſuggeſted Dangers*, no *Spectrums* to fright the World with? It could not be poſſible, but the *Northern* Part of *Britain* muſt furniſh Vapours enough from ſo cold and moiſt an Air, which being exhaled by the Heats of *High-Flying* Brains, ſhould blaze in various Meteors in our *Southern* Climate.

Who could queſtion, but the ſame Spirit here would act the ſame ridiculous Part, as it did there, and that we ſhould have the very Counterpart of the State Politicks of the Party?

Did not a Noble Peer, *North by Tweed*, tell the *Scots* ſad and diſmal Stories of the fatal Conſequences of the Union? Did he not tell the Country People, they ſhould get no *Cale*, the Merchants they ſhould get no *Trade*, the Poor no *Salt*, the Gentlemen no *Employ*, the Ladies no *Husbands*? ——— And muſt all theſe Dangers befall *Scotland*, Gentlemen, and is there nothing ſad and lamentable to befall *England* too?

Let's come a little to Parallels, and was ever ſuch Contraries match'd in this World? In *Scotland*, the *Jacobite* and *Prelatiſt* take Care of the *Presbyterian*; in *England*, the *Occaſional-Conformiſt* ventures his Life for the *Church*; the Gentlemen that never come nearer the Church than that Houſe of *Satan*, the Tavern, cry out in Parliament, that the Act of Security is not ſufficient; in

In *England* the Bishops are exhorted to take Care of themselves, and their Constitution by such as——— Here's merry Sort of Doings indeed! Never did Contraries better illustrate; Never was a Treaty of Union so handsomly banter'd!

Nor can poor King *William* rest in his Grave, but he must be brought upon the Stage too———In vain, that glorious Monarch labour'd for our Peace, and dy'd a Sacrifice to our Ingratitude; but the very Vipers, he warm'd by his Influence, hiss at him, and persecute the Memory of the Man; who if he had any Failing, it was in mistaking their Hypocrisie for Merit, and bestowing his favours on the worthless and wayward Wretches that abus'd him.

These are the People that best suit a Simily, happily brought by a noble Lord in another Case, where he brings in the *Papists*, who, pretending to worship GOD, say ten *Ave-Marias* to one *Pater-Noster*. These are the People, who pretending Liberty and Law, and the Good of *England*, pay ten Homages to King *James*, for one to King *William*.

Miracles, I believe, are no more ceased in this Age, than they were in the last; and Abundance of Parallel Cases have been to this in the World; it is not long since the Bishops and Clergy persecuted the *Dissenters* for the Security of the Church of *England*, and all Manner of Rapine and Violence was decently exercis'd against Protestants for the Benefit of the Protestant Religion—Now the Tables are nicely turn'd, and the Face of things changes; here we have the *Papist* prompts the *Presbyterians* to take Arms against the Government, in order to preserve the Protestant Religion; there you have the half in half, or Occasional Conformist applying to the Bishops to look about them, and still 'tis for the Protestant Religion.

Were ever my Lords the Bishops so banter'd? Was ever such a Jest put upon Men of their Character, as if they did not understand their Concern in the Church or in the Protestant Religion, without going for Advice to those Occasional People, against whom so many of them lately pass'd an Act of Parliament, as Persons pernicious to the Church's Safety?

And after all, what is it my Lords the Bishops are in Danger of, and what must they not do? ——— They must not settle the Kirk of *Scotland*; they must not set up *Presbytery*, lest *Presbytery* pull down the Church —Put this into *English*, They must not unite with *Presbyterians*; no Peace with Hereticks, just the same; you must not treat with that Church, that is establish'd already, nor with the People, because they differ from you, and yet you cannot but own, they differ from you in nothing essential——

The Plot against the Union stands in need of such slight weak Work as this, it cannot be upheld but by such shifting; and I wonder, the Necessity the World is in to laugh at it, does not open the Eyes of the People themselves.

When Men of the best Parts happen to be embark'd in the Defence of a bad Cause, what weak wooden Work do they make of it? How many Shifts and Turns will they make, like a Hare close hunted, to save what they see a Necessity to give up? Let any Man but ask a famous Orator of our Law, how he was put to it once to defend a *High-Flying* Cause at the Bar of the House of Lords, where a new Sacramental Test was attempted on the Subjects of *C—lina*? How willingly would that Gentleman have been without his Fee, to have shun'd the Pleading; and what sorry Reserves and Retreats did he make to extenuate, what he could not justifie?

Just thus the Patriots of Tyranny are driven to their Shifts, to defend what they own by the Consequence they cannot support; when by Reason and Strength of Argument they cannot maintain their Cause, How do they seek the Shelter of all the little Subterfuges in the World to uphold them?

How do they strive to make other People complain, fill the Heads of the common People with Fears and Jealousies, and drive every Nail that will go; divide, amuse, fright, wheedle and jingle them into Discontents. In one Part, the *Presbyterians* are frighted with the threatning Encroachments of Episcopacy, Breach of their National Covenants, in consenting to establish a Prelatick Church, which they fancy themselves

ſelves bound to reform, ſubjecting themſelves to a ſuperiour Nation, quieting their Soveraignty, tranſpoſing their Crown, and the like.

In another Part, the Church of *England* are bid to look about them, and alarm'd with the frightful Apprehenſions of Danger from eſtabliſhing the Proteſtant Religion, as if *Presbytery* were the new Antichriſt they talk'd of.

I muſt confeſs, I wonder much at Inferences drawn from *Popiſh* Experiments to alarm the Church, and that the Biſhops ſhould be warn'd of Dangers from obliging a Proteſtant Church, becauſe they met with Ingratitude from the *Popiſh*——Let any Man tell me, when Proteſtants, exerciſing Acts of Charity, Lenity, Aſſiſtance and Support to *Popiſh* Powers, were otherwiſe treated; ſomething of which I mention'd lately in the Caſe of the Emperor——

But I ſee no Conſequence to be drawn from it, that the Spirit of Ingratitude muſt reign in a Proteſtant Church, and that the Church of *England* ſhall receive ungrateful Treatment from the *Presbyterian* in *Scotland*—And therefore in this, to ſay, *what has been, may be*, will not reach the Caſe—Becauſe it cannot be prov'd, that ever the *Presbyterians* in *Scotland* have been ingrate to the Church of *England* for any Favours receiv'd, nor as I remember, has there been any Occaſion given them.

But I am not anſwering Speeches, I have ſeen none yet, but what anſwer themſelves, and merit more to be let alone, than meddled with,

The Concurring with the Terms of a Treaty is not an Act of Favour, but a neceſſary Juſtice; the Union is a mutual Stipulation, and Securities ought to be reciprocally given——Thoſe that argue againſt the Church of *England*, giving the Act of Security in Church Matters to *Scotland*, are the very ſame Party, and they do it by the very ſame Arguments, as they argue in *Scotland* againſt the *Presbyterian* Church there, conſenting to the Eſtabliſhment of the *Engliſh* Church; and in this prepoſterous Contradiction the whole *Arcana* are diſcover'd, and any reaſonable Man, whoſe Senſes are at hand, may ſee, it is not Care of the reſpective Churches, but Party Feud.

A Man may in theſe Caſes be a little merry with the Perſons, but really the Subject is too ſerious to jeſt with; for this Juggling is calculated at nothing leſs than the fatal dividing, and conſequently ruining both theſe Nations, as to their Peace, and all the future Proſpects of their Happineſs.

I hope, all the Gentlemen that have appear'd thus unhappily againſt it, have not the ſame deſtructive Deſign upon their Country; but I muſt confeſs, the Difference ſeems to me not to be very conſiderable, whether we are wilfully or ignorantly deſtroy'd.

And tho' in our defending our ſelves againſt Miſchief, the ſame Reſentment is not due to the well-meaning, as malicious Oppoſer, yet the ſame Oppoſition is certainly due to the Miſchief it ſelf.

Safety, Peace, Settlement and Strength are the immediate Advantages both Nations expect from this Union; Jealouſie of one another, Prejudices and Diſtruſt are on both ſides thrown in the Way, they are equally pernicious to the main End, let them come from what hand ſoever; and therefore we ought with equal Care to defend our ſelves.

In *Scotland* a wild Attempt has been made to prove, the *Diſſenters* in *England* are enclin'd to Epiſcopacy, and therefore not to be truſted by the Kirk there——In *England*, ſtrong Motions are made to render the Settlement of the Kirk in *Scotland* dangerous to the Church, and the Biſhops are exhorted to look about them.

Now, one of theſe Deſigns I take to be malicious, the other ignorant, I do not ſay which of them is one or the other; but be it which way it will, they are equally fatal and miſchievous in their Event, equally pernicious to the publick Peace, and ought with equal Care to be fenc'd againſt in the Purſuit of the general Good of the Nation.

'Tis all one to me, whether Fool or Knave attempts to ſet my Houſe on Fire, 'tis my Buſineſs to prevent my Houſe being burnt; and as to Puniſhment of Parties, or Cenſure of Inſtruments, that's a thing by it ſelf, they ought to be us'd according to their Circumſtances.

Wherein

WHEREAS, the Author of this Paper has for some time been out of England, *and consequently is suppos'd not near enough to his Affairs, to receive such Letters as are wanted to be convey'd to him; These are to give Notice, that any Letters left as usual for him at* Mr. Matthews *will carefully be sent to him, and such Answers as are proper, shall be return'd by him with all Speed, either in this Paper, or as shall be Directed.*

Also that all such serious or diverting Subjects, whether Questions or otherwise, as any of the Ingenious Readers are pleas'd to send as formerly, shall be spoken to as usual, in the best manner the Author can do it, which he hopes shall be as acceptable as before.

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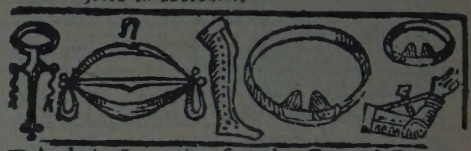

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